

MARCIA A. LECLERC
MAYOR

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD
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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

October 15, 2016

Mr. Chris Nolan
H. Pearce Commercial
393 State Street
North Haven, CT 06473

Dear Mr. Nolan:

The Town of East Hartford is pleased once again, to submit a response to the latest request for proposals issued by MMCT Venture, LLC.

Our submission which was made on November 6, 2015 remains in full effect, including the municipal and property approval forms for the submitted site on Silver Lane.

Since our original submission, construction has begun at both the Pratt & Whitney headquarters building and the United Technology Research Center. They are projected to be completed by December 2017.

In addition, great progress has been on the 350,000 square-foot outlet shops at Rentschler Field with a target date for opening in the spring of 2018. The State has committed \$12 million in state bond funds under the Urban Action grant program to the town for the outlet project. On July 12, 2016, the State approved a bond issue for the Town of East Hartford as follows: "To provide a grant in aid to Town of East Hartford for public infrastructure improvements for redevelopment of the Silver Lane and Rentschler Field corridor." I have included a recent article from our local newspaper and Hartford Courant which describe the current status of the project, and next steps.

There are several noteworthy items which have transpired and have been discussed over the past 12 months in meetings with tribal officials. We have submitted correspondence to the tribes on several occasions and have attached copies to reference each issue.

First, on November 18, 2015, a large meeting was held to address questions related to our initial submission. As you can review in the attached summary, a question was asked regarding our Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) corridor study of Silver Lane. The study was approved by

CRCOG and is currently underway. Transystems was selected as the consultant and has an 18-month timeframe.

Next, we submitted a letter dated December 28, 2015, reconfirming that the Town of East Hartford does not need a referendum with respect to actions taken by the Town in connection with the proposed casino. The letter is from our Corporation Counsel Scott Chadwick.

On July 22nd, the Town submitted to members of the tribes, a comprehensive update on several issues including, the completion of the Willowbrook Study, the City and Town Development Act, two planning studies which are underway on Silver Lane, and a letter from Goodwin College which outlines their plans for a marina, a new commercial building near their campus, and an 80-120 unit housing project.

Included in that update, was a description of our Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization (BAR) grant which is also for Silver Lane. Outlined in the memo, the funding will be used for land-use planning, conceptual designs, zoning regulations review and other related activities. The study is in the initial stages and town has selected the firm of Milone & MacBroom as the consultant.

Included in our package, is a revised site plan prepared by JCJ Architecture. The new plan enables development of a 300,000 square foot entertainment and gaming venue built entirely on the existing Showcase Cinemas property, along with structured parking for 3,700 vehicles. The existing rear parking lot at Showcase Cinemas (150,000 square feet) is repurposed, enables dramatic expansion to existing building and rapid build out of a primary gaming floor entirely under one roof.

Finally, the Town is including a portfolio of information from the developer, Mr. Anthony Rovosa.

The Town of East Hartford remains confident in our submission, speed to market, professional and developer- friendly process, and our upfront and transparent responses at every stage during this past year.

Sincerely,



Marcia A. Leclerc
Mayor

MARCIA A. LECLERC
MAYOR



Telephone: (860) 291-7245
Facsimile: (860) 282-2978

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

740 Main Street
East Hartford, Connecticut 06108-3114

November 18, 2015

Ms. Barbara Pearce
H. Pearce Commercial
393 State Street
North Haven, CT 06473

Dear Ms. Pearce:

I would like to thank you and your colleagues for meeting with the Town of East Hartford and my team of professionals regarding our proposal for a new gaming facility within our town.

I would like to address several comments and questions which came up during our meeting in order to provide further clarification and information.

The issues regarding transportation, traffic, and ease of access, are of high importance to both the tribes and the town. As a follow up to the summary provided by my Public Works Director, Tim Bockus, I am attaching three documents which outline current and future initiatives being undertaken by regional and state entities on the Interstates and Silver Lane (State Route 502).

The first attachment further explains the issue posed by Ms. Barbara Pearce regarding the traffic at the interchange of I-91, 84 and Route 5 and 15. The Department of Transportation press release outlines the concerns, remedies and schedule. The design is anticipated to be completed by November 2017 and construction to start in spring 2018. As Mr. Bockus explained, the project is the highest priority for the DOT.

The second attachment is the Town's application to the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) for a comprehensive corridor study of Silver Lane. As stated in the application, "The study will examine existing road conditions, intersection capacity analysis, pedestrian safety concerns, bicycle safety concerns, and access management issues." The study will take into consideration existing conditions, future traffic projections, and full build-out scenarios.

The third document is the CRCOG Unified Planning Work Program which illustrates our inclusion in the region's comprehensive list of projects. The study was ranked second in terms of the CRCOG priority list, with consultant selection now through March 2016 and the actual study April 2016 through June 2017.

Lastly, I would like to address a question posed by Attorney Santagata concerning the location of the proposed casino gaming facility. We have reviewed Special Act No. 15-7, and the Office of Legislative Research's Bill Analysis for Senate Bill No. 1090 (which is the basis of the Special Act). The definition of "municipality" in the Act is neither limited to municipalities north of Hartford, nor to communities located on the I-91 corridor. This was further confirmed through consultation with members of the legislative delegation. Accordingly, the current law allows the Town of East Hartford to be considered as a site for the proposed casino gaming facility without further legislative action.

I hope this additional information provides clarity to some of the issues which were discussed at our meeting. As I stated, our community has been an early and vocal supporter of establishing a new gambling entertainment venue in our region. When you select East Hartford, you will gain the partnership of our town including my team of directors, whom you met at our meeting, which will work to make this project a success. As business leaders who have a reputation of quality and excellence, you deserve a location and a community which can provide the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ma' with a long, sweeping underline.

Marcia A. Leclerc
Mayor

Attachments:

- DOT Press Release
- Town application to CRCOG
- CRCOG Work Plan

Email cc:

- Kevin Brown
- Rodney Bulter
- Felix Rappaport
- Robert Soper
- Attorney Michael Santagata
- Dr. Benjamin Mammina
- Chuck Bunnell
- William Satti
- Paul Tresnan
- Bryan Hayes
- David Granata
- Anthony Rovosa

PRESS RELEASE

NEWINGTON, CT – The Connecticut Department of Transportation's (Department) Office of Engineering is developing plans to relocate I-91 northbound Interchange 29, and widen I-91 northbound and Route 15 northbound to I-84 East in the city of Hartford and town of East Hartford.

The purpose of the project is to address safety concerns associated with the capacity and operational deficiencies at the I-91 northbound Interchange 29, which routinely experiences significant traffic delays and above average crash frequency. Much of this can be attributed to the steep vertical grade and single-lane configuration of the ramp, the heavy traffic weave on the Charter Oak Bridge, and the near capacity volumes on I-91.

The proposed improvements include widening I-91 northbound to extend the four-lane travel section from Interchange 27 to Interchange 29 to relieve congestion, address significant safety concerns, and provide an efficient I-91 to I-84 connection. It is also proposed to remove the existing ramp at I-91 northbound Interchange 29 and provide a major diverge south of the I-91 bridge over Route 15 to address the existing adverse vertical grade and limited capacity of the existing ramp. The new I-91 diverge will consist of three lanes to the right, maintaining I-91 traffic (existing condition), and two lanes to the left, conveying traffic to Route 15 northbound via a new structure over Route 15 southbound. The existing pavement markings on the Charter Oak Bridge will be modified to accommodate the additional northbound lane from I-91. Additional improvements include widening of Route 15 northbound to three travel lanes, from the Charter Oak Bridge to the Silver Lane underpass, to address congestion concerns on Route 15 and allow a more desirable distance from Interchange 29 on I-91 to merge from three travel lanes to two prior to its merge with I-84 East.

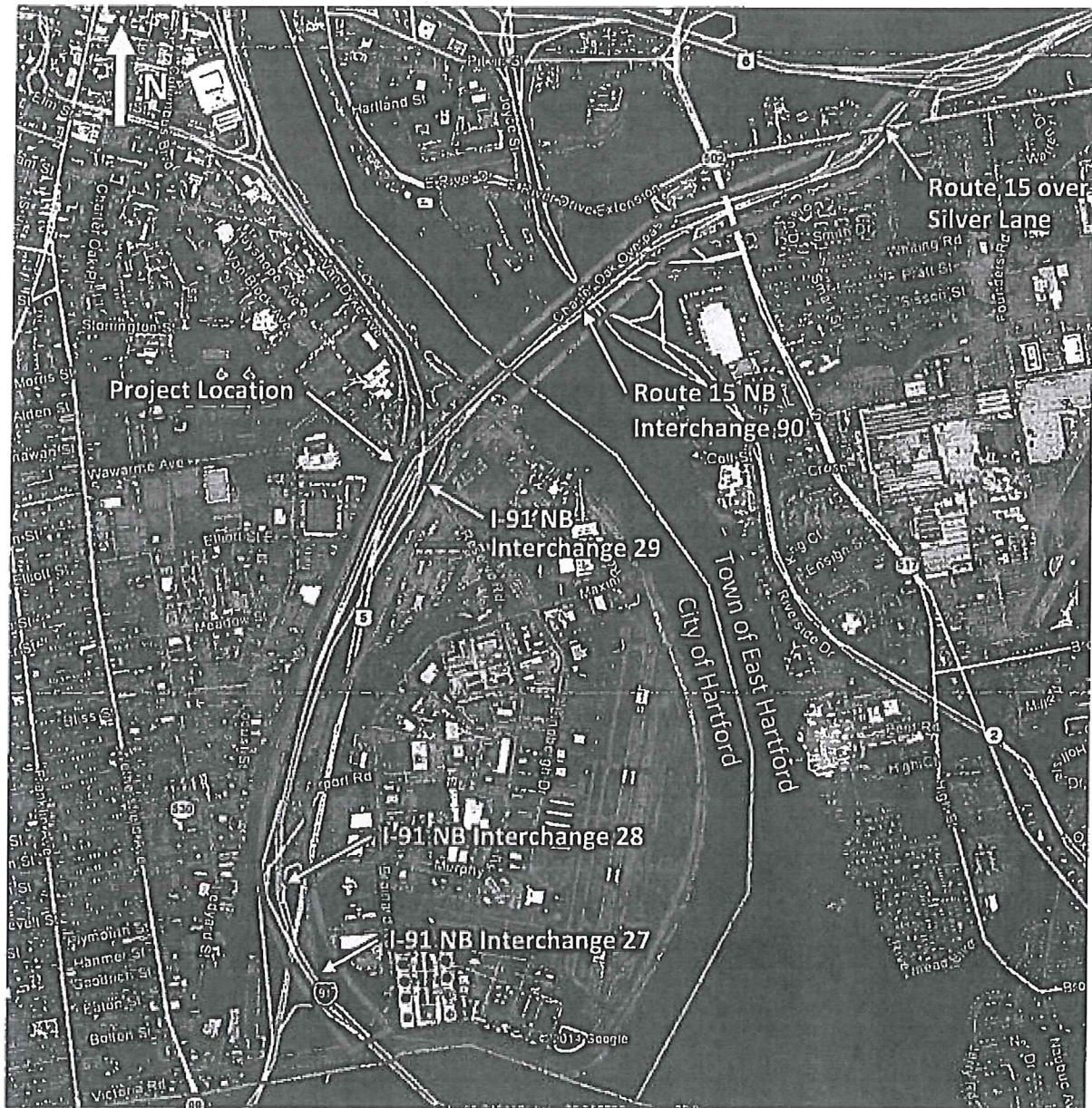
The present schedule indicates that the design will be completed in November 2017, with construction anticipated to start in the spring of 2018, assuming acceptance of the project, availability of funding and receipt of any required right-of-way and environmental permits. This project will be undertaken with 80% federal and 20% state funds.

It is the Department's policy to keep the public informed and involved when such projects are undertaken. It is important that the community share its concerns with us to assist in the project's development. A public informational meeting will be conducted upon the completion of the preliminary design. At this time, it is not anticipated that a formal public hearing will be necessary.

Anyone interested in receiving information on this project may do so by contacting Ms. Susan M. Libatique, Principal Engineer, at (860) 594-3179 or by e-mail at Susan.Libatique@ct.gov. Please make reference to State Project No. 63-703.

PROJECT NO. 63-703
RELOCATION OF I-91 NB INTERCHANGE 29 AND
WIDENING OF I-91 NB AND ROUTE 15 NB TO I-84 EB
HARTFORD AND EAST HARTFORD

PROJECT LOCATION MAP:



Task 13: Silver Lane (SR 502) Corridor Study, East Hartford

This transportation study is proposed for Silver Lane (SR 502) from the intersection of Route 15 easterly to the intersection of Forbes Street, a distance of approximately 2 miles. Within these limits, Silver Lane varies in cross section from two lanes to four lanes, and varies in average daily traffic volumes. The roadway is served by several CTtransit bus stops, and pedestrian activity is significant, especially during events at Rentschler Field. The East Coast Greenway currently traverses the study area via a temporary route with both on-road and off-road segments. There are prime opportunities to plan for significant additional bike and bus connectivity by working towards identifying connections to existing trails, and studying improvements to bus service east of Hartford (Fastrak East).

The area contains commercial, industrial and residential land use. On the west end of the study, in addition to Pratt & Whitney Division of United Technologies, the United Technologies Research Center, Cabela's flagship store, and several retail shopping centers of varying size, significant additional development is proposed. Meanwhile, many of the corridor's older strip shopping centers lie completely or largely vacant, in need of substantial reinvestment to make them attractive to tenants, while large vacant parcels create gaps in the urban fabric. The Town has determined that redevelopment of underutilized sites and infill development of vacant areas is critical to raising the level of activity along the corridor and generating business for commercial uses.

The study will examine existing transportation conditions within the corridor for all modes of travel. Of specific concern is the safety of pedestrians during events, and the corridor's ability to accommodate ever increasing travel demands. Among common transportation study items, the study is anticipated to assess and recommend improvements for access management; pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connectivity; and intersection/roadway operations under both existing conditions and future traffic projections. The goal is to offer a set of consensus recommendations that ensure safe and efficient movement of traffic, bicycles, transit users, and pedestrians as the Silver Lane corridor is developed.

Project Cost Estimation

\$200,000.00

PROJECT SPONSORS:

Lead Agency: CRCOG

Participants: CTDOT, Town of East Hartford

ACTIVITIES:

The study will identify and assess existing and projected transportation needs, and identify potential solutions. It is anticipated that a variety of alternatives will be considered, including but not limited to intersection improvements and multi-modal solutions. In addition to long term visions, the study will aim to identify immediately implementable solutions, possibly funded via the STP, CMAQ, Safety, or Fix-it-First funding sources. A vigorous public and stakeholder outreach process will be maintained throughout the entire study process. The process aims to solicit and consider input in order to reach a plan whose recommendation will be supported by both the community and major stakeholders. Major stakeholders such as UTC and Goodwin College will be engaged in the study.

PRODUCTS:

Preliminary short- and long-term conceptual plans and recommendations for key safety and transportation improvements. Improvement recommendations and strategies are expected to include roadway (traffic flow, safety, and geometrics), transit, bicycle, and pedestrian recommendations. Given a number of development plans, the study will also develop sustainable land use recommendations and strategies.

COST:

\$200,000 estimated total project cost

SCHEDULE:

	FY2016				FY2017			
	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
Select Consultant								
Conduct Study								

MARCIA A. LECLERC
MAYOR

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD
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East Hartford, Connecticut 06108

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OFFICE OF THE
CORPORATION COUNSEL

December 28, 2015

Mayor Marcia Leclerc
Town of East Hartford
740 Main Street
East Hartford, CT 06108

Re: **Casino/Town Action**

Dear Mayor Leclerc:

You have asked whether the East Hartford Town Charter requires a referendum with respect to actions taken by the Town in connection with the proposed casino. Please be advised that the Town Charter does not require a referendum in this instance. More specifically, the Town of East Hartford may enter into a development agreement with the tribal business entity without a referendum.

I trust this satisfies your request. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



SCOTT R. CHADWICK
Corporation Counsel

SRC:jas

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kevin Brown
Rodney Butler
Chuck Bunnell
Bob Hayward

Cc: Felix Rappaport
Mario Kontomerkos
Deborah Mallon

FROM: Marcia Leclerc

DATE: July 22, 2016

RE: Town of East Hartford Update

Thank you for taking the time this past Monday to review several new developments in our community which have occurred since our last meeting over seven months ago and also new developments that were discussed at our most recent meeting have been are summarized below to share with Felix, Deb and Mario.

Update

The Town, with the assistance of Milone & MacBroom, has completed its study of the Willow Brook watershed area along Silver Lane. The thorough review included a study of the flood plain area and its changes which have occurred over the past 20 years. The Town is currently requesting an update of its flood maps with FEMA. These changes will shrink the flood area in and around Silver Lane and open up additional land for development.

At our last meeting with the Chief Financial Officers I extended the option of potential tax abatement to any additional parcels purchased for redevelopment in the vicinity. At our most recent meeting I conveyed that if the mill rate becomes an impediment to the realization of MMCT selecting East Hartford as your preferred site, the Town will consider additional financial incentives.

New Development Tool

The Town of East Hartford will hold a referendum to approve the Connecticut City and Town Development Act in November, 2016. Once approved, the Town will have additional powers to undertake programs and projects to revitalize the Silver Lane corridor. The most important of these powers allows the Town to provide broad tax relief and tax abatements on a project by project basis. This power would effectively allow identified developers to pay real property taxes at rates that meet or beat the tax rates of other municipalities. The Act would also allow the Town to:

- Make mortgage loans or other loans or advances to developers of development property;
- Borrow money and to issue its bonds or notes or other obligations (including refunding bonds) for a term up to 30 years (40 years for housing projects); and

- Make loans (which also include commitments to make loans and advances) to any developer of development property to provide funds in furtherance of the purposes of the City and Town Development Act.

New Planning Grants and Studies

The Town has been awarded two grants in the past several months to conduct studies in the area of the Silver Lane Corridor, specifically from Main Street to Forbes Street. The grants will be conducted concurrently and will compliment development of the proposed casino.

- The first is a \$200,000 Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. The funding will be matched with \$20,000 brownfields investigation funding from the Environmental Protection Agency. The funding will be used for environmental investigations, and land-use planning activities including but not limited to an existing land use review, zoning regulations review, market studies, full-build scenarios, wetland delineation, conceptual designs, and others.
- The second is a \$200,000 grant from the Capitol Region Council of Governments, funded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The study will examine transportation data, existing conditions including roadways, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, bus shelters, and transit systems. Further, it will consider future conditions including new development on vacant or underutilizes parcels of land and future traffic forecasts. Finally, the study will develop goals and a vision for moving forward, complete with several alternatives to roadway improvements. Short-term and long-term goals will be identified.

We anticipate these studies to be completed within a 12 to 18 month timeframe. If the selection of the casino location occurs within this timeframe, we would encourage a representative from MMCT to participate in the planning process and study committee.

Goodwin College

I am including as an attachment, a letter from Mr. Todd Andrews, Vice President of Economic and Strategic Development of Goodwin College. The letter outlines several new initiatives underway at the college.

- Goodwin has plans for a new commercial mixed-use development, including housing, along the riverfront. Transportation circulation routes will be established between this new waterfront development and the development sites on Silver Lane, including the outlet shops and proposed casino site.
- The most exciting aspect of this development is Goodwin is currently in the permitting phase for a minimum 50-slip marina which could accommodate vessels up to 75 feet. This riverfront development and marina are within close proximity of the proposed casino site and is unique to the East Hartford location. These developments will open up additional amazing opportunities incorporating river transportation from all points along the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound.

I fully believe that our upfront and transparent commitment to this project displays our full and enthusiastic support of the MMCT venture.



July 20, 2016

Mayor Marcia Leclerc
Town of East Hartford
740 Main Street
East Hartford, CT 06108

Dear Mayor Leclerc,

I wanted to provide you with a brief summary of development projects Goodwin College currently are considering or are in the planning stages.

Along the riverfront, Goodwin is in the permitting stages for a 50 plus slip marina which will could accommodate vessels as large as 75 feet. Permitting has been underway for over a year now and we expect final approvals by early 2017 with anticipated start of construction in 2017 or 2018. To complement the marina, we have begun design of a mixed use commercial building for the riverfront. We envision an upscale restaurant, retail and commercial space and perhaps some upscale housing. We also plan on public gathering spaces and a promenade to take advantage of the riverfront and connection to the regional multi-use trail system which is expanding north and south of the college campus. We expect design to be completed in 2017 with possible start of construction in 2018.

It is also envisioned that we could create a water shuttle to other venues in and around the area. We will also expand Goodwin's trolley which could circulate to other East Hartford destinations like Rentschler Field and the proposed casino on Silver Lane.

Goodwin has prepared a development site at the corner of Main and Ensign Street for the construction of a 25,000 square foot mixed use commercial building with ground floor retail. We are actively seeking a developer for this project and anticipate submitting land use approval applications in the coming months.

Also in design is a first phase 80-120 unit housing project in the area of Ensign Street and Willowbrook Road and southern portion of King Court. A mixed use building is under design which will have commercial/retail on 1st floor and housing units on upper floors. We anticipate permitting in 2017 with construction in 2018.

Goodwin will be expanding our magnet schools with recently approved State of Connecticut funding of \$20 million which will create new facilities in the coming months. The Goodwin College Early Childhood Magnet School will increase in size in order to serve its current PK- 2nd grade student base with an expansion to 5th grade. We will renovate the vacant Willowbrook School building for this project. The CT River Academy at Goodwin College magnet high school will be expanding its STEM curriculum into Advanced Manufacturing and we will be building an Advanced Manufacturing Training Center and plans are already in process.

We are excited about these plans and look forward to working with the Town. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Todd Andrews
Vice President
Economic & Strategic Development

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The Gazette

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Locally sourced since 1885

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ehgazette.com

\$15.8M tax break for Outlet Shops

*Plans, promises to
bring 1,800 jobs*

By Bill Doak

If plans materialize, East Hartford is about to undergo a major transformation into a retail shopping destination.

Tuesday the Town Council digested a flurry of plans and projections put forth by architects, developers, the town's attorney, mayor, and development director focused on turning the vacant areas remaining at the former Rentschler Field airport into a residential and retail Mecca. Work has already begun on a \$7 million access road, \$12 million in state bond funds have been committed to help build a proposed 349,000-square-foot retail outlet mall.

The Council heard from the Horizon Group which is ready to break ground this month on the development, anticipating a grand opening in spring of 2018. Nine buildings will be constructed around an 'open air' design corridors concept with a central square featuring a fountain and plaza said Horizon's Phil Waters. "Our objective is to open in 2018. To do that we have to start moving dirt in October," he declared during Tuesday's

Outlet Shoppes

From Page 1

presentation. "We'll start right way and go full bore. What will delays us are the winters."

Thursday East Hartford's Economic Development Director Eileen Buckheit and town attorney Rich Gentile will meet with the state Dept. of Economic and Community Development and the Capitol Region Development Authority to compose a memorandum of understanding spelling out what the \$12 million in state bonds will be used for, and finalize a Financial Assistance Agreement.

East Hartford Finance Director Mike Walsh outlined 10-year tax abatement, allowable as the project will be in an Enterprise Zone. Recent change to state law lengthened the time allowed in such abatements from 7 to 10 years, he noted. The abatement schedule

is based on \$60 million in construction costs - half of the developer's estimate of the cost to build the shops - with 100 percent tax forgiveness in the first two years, dropping to 40 percent in the final year. The schedule would generate a total of \$7 million for the town over the decade with the developers realizing a tax savings totaling \$15.8 million. The estimate did not include personal property tax revenue, noted Town Council Chair Richard Kehoe.

Phase I will be followed by Phase II which would add another 71,000 square feet to the outdoor facility located just to the south of Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field. A residential component to the development proposed by the Matos Group, the master developer of the airfield project since 2004, would add two hotels and five restaurants, and 800 to 1,000 units of residential housing and "entertainment venues." The housing would be designed to appeal to the

expected 8,000 new technology workers being hired by United Technologies Corporation's Pratt & Whitney Aircraft to help catch up with global back orders anticipated due to the success of the company's revolutionary geared turbo-fan engine, and the entire development would be technology-oriented, said Dan Matos.

"UTC supports this project," Matos told the Council. "We need to find a way to keep Horizon on schedule. There's work to be done to get to the finish line." The town has been working with the state to bring the project to fruition. Housing would be built west of the outlet mall adjacent to P&W buildings with the food court and "sit-down restaurants" in the northwest corner to make it easier for nearby UTC employees to walk over for lunch.

A 135-acre wildlife preserve deeded to the town on the east side of the development could feature hiking trails and paths, Matos said.

Hartford Courant

Groundbreaking Imminent For The Outlet Shoppes At Rentschler Field; Town To Consider Tax Abatement

By Kathleen McWilliams

OCTOBER 6, 2016 | EAST HARTFORD

The town is being asked to consider a \$15.7 million tax abatement over 10 years to help The Outlet Shoppes at Rentschler Field become a reality.

At a town council meeting Wednesday night, Horizon Group Properties officials said they expect a groundbreaking this fall for the 420,000-square-foot mall, with a projected opening date of spring 2018.

But before shovels are put in the ground to bring the \$115 million outlet mall to fruition, the developers need financial assistance from the town.

East Hartford Finance Director Mike Walsh said a tax abatement totaling \$15.7 million over 10 years would be the best option for both the town and developers.

"It was incumbent on us to meet the needs of the developer," Walsh said. "The cost of doing business is higher in Connecticut than in other places. This plan balances the town's need for revenue and the developers need for a tax benefit."

The tax abatement would not require the Horizon Group to pay any property tax on the mall during the first two years of operation, and then would discount the tax payments incrementally each year after that until the developer was only saving \$1 million during the final year. After 10 years, the developer would pay taxes to the town in full.

"At a glance, to make this project happen, this is the abatement that works," Walsh said.

The tax abatement will need to be approved by the town council later this month before it is finalized and work can begin on the project that developers have dubbed "transformational" for the town.

The Rentschler Field and Silver Lane area has been targeted for development in town and was awarded \$12 million in July from the state Department of Economic and Community Development for infrastructure improvements to prepare the site for the mall.

Walsh's presentation on the proposed tax abatement came after an hour-long presentation from Horizon Group Properties representatives on the specifics of the project.

Mayor Marcia Leclerc said she wanted developers to give an updated portrait of the project since a year has passed since the plan had been presented to the council. The developer had scheduled a groundbreaking for October of last year but delayed it until more funding was secured.

"Last year you were given an idea of the project, but now it is a reality," Leclerc said. "All of us need to start working together and pull this together."

Phil Waters from the Horizon Group said more than 90 retailers would be leasing from the developer, and that the company plans to put in several sit-down continental dining options as well as a food court and food kiosks.

Other plans include aviation-themed decor, fountains, fire pits and accommodations for special events.

"We plan special events that tie us to the [shopping] center. What I mean by that is that we'll do tree lightings, menorah lightings, we'll bring the high school band out," Waters said.

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